

Written on OCTOBER 11, 2012 AT 8:10 AM by JWICK

Communication Works to reduce Missed Appointments

Filed under FAMILIES, FLEET AND THE FLEET MARINE FORCE, HOSPITALS

(NO COMMENTS)

By Dan BarberNaval Hospital Twentynine Palms



121003-N-QV661- HM2 Rachel Prince, optometry technician at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms speaks to a U.S. Marine. The Optometry Department only sees active duty patients at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, but remains one of the busiest in the hospital. (Official U.S. Navy Photo by Dan Barber)

Showing up late or not showing up at all for medical appointments is an ongoing challenge for most military treatment facilities. In 2010 the average monthly appointment “no-show” rate was 10 percent at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms (NHTP). This rate translated into about 120 empty appointments each month that could have been used by other beneficiaries.

Empty appointment slots also represent a potential loss of productivity each month which could cause the demand for health care to be underestimated at this command, which ultimately would negatively affect resource allocation.

In response, the leadership of the hospital decided that it needed to communicate to the patients how important it is for them to use their medical benefit properly.

A campaign was started to educate the beneficiaries using multiple communications channels, with the core message to family members and retirees, that missing medical appointments is ‘socially unacceptable’ and for the active duty to reemphasize that missing medical appointments can lead them to be non-deployable.

On a daily basis at NHTP the Command Master Chief communicates to the Marine Corps enlisted leaders at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC) about Marines or Sailors missing appointments which could lead to those members being unfit for deployment.

Brigadier General George Smith, Jr., Commanding General MCAGCC and Sergeant Major Matthew Brookshire fully support the efforts of the Naval Hospital and fully understand the importance of beneficiaries properly using their medical benefit and not squandering that

Navy Medicine Video

Navy Medicine is a global healthcare network of 63,000 Navy medical personnel around the world who provide high quality health care to more than one million eligible beneficiaries. Navy Medicine personnel deploy with Sailors and Marines worldwide, providing critical mission support aboard ship, in the air, under the sea and on the battlefield.

Navy Medicine Social Media

[twitter](#) Follow us on Twitter

[facebook](#) Join us on Facebook

[issuu](#) Read our publications

[flickr](#) View our photo stream

[YouTube](#) Watch our videos

Navy Medicine Live Archives

[February 2015 \(15\)](#)

[January 2015 \(12\)](#)

[December 2014 \(17\)](#)

[November 2014 \(11\)](#)

valuable medical asset.

Since October 2010 the hospital’s monthly newsletter “[The Examiner](#)” has a running statement placed on its front page to inform readers about the number of missed appointments and the percentage they represented for all available appointments during the reporting period. Also, early each week-day available open appointments in Family Medicine and Pediatrics, along with the stats for missed appointments for the previous day’s clinics, are posted on the command’s [Face Book page](#) to inform patients of appointment availability and to help the command optimize clinic appointments. Usually within an hour of posting, this message gets over 100 views.

The command, under the leadership of Captain Jay Sourbeer, MC, USN, uses every opportunity to inform the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center’s leadership about how important it is for every eligible beneficiary to keep their medical appointment.

During the first year of this campaign, missed appointments decreased to an average of 7.4 percent, this year this average is down to 5.9 percent.

To maintain optimal patient care, Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms will keep these channels of communication open and updated daily.

← Next post

Previous post →

jwick tagged this post with: [Appointments](#), [BUMED](#), [communications](#), [corpsman](#), [Defense](#), [DoD](#), [health](#), [hospital](#), [Marine Corps](#), [medical](#), [military treatment facilities](#), [Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery](#), [Navy Medicine](#), [sailors](#), [Surgeon General](#), [training](#), [TRICARE](#), [wellness](#)

Read 107 articles by [jwick](#)

| |
|-------------------------------------|
| October 2014 (15) |
| September 2014 (20) |
| August 2014 (14) |
| July 2014 (13) |
| June 2014 (8) |
| May 2014 (11) |
| April 2014 (9) |
| March 2014 (14) |
| February 2014 (7) |
| January 2014 (7) |
| December 2013 (7) |
| November 2013 (12) |
| October 2013 (7) |
| September 2013 (14) |
| August 2013 (13) |
| July 2013 (11) |
| June 2013 (22) |
| May 2013 (15) |
| April 2013 (14) |
| March 2013 (14) |
| February 2013 (14) |
| January 2013 (12) |
| December 2012 (11) |
| November 2012 (11) |
| October 2012 (7) |
| September 2012 (9) |
| August 2012 (12) |
| July 2012 (13) |
| June 2012 (17) |
| May 2012 (22) |
| April 2012 (14) |
| March 2012 (13) |
| February 2012 (14) |
| January 2012 (13) |
| December 2011 (13) |
| November 2011 (20) |
| October 2011 (22) |
| September 2011 (12) |
| August 2011 (16) |